

# **IMPACT**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Presentation:**

- Can each county receive a disk with the PowerPoint presentation and the script...or at least a flip chart or transparencies?
  - No, instead each county can access the website [www.dfcs.dhr.georgia.gov/IMPACT](http://www.dfcs.dhr.georgia.gov/IMPACT) and all forms, the orientation presentation (in Microsoft Word and PowerPoint), the continuum, flow-charts, etc. are available.
- Shouldn't the DFCS Mission statement include the purpose of foster care & adoption?
  - Both statements are directed at ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and families.
- On the IMPACT Resource Family Approval Process Document Checklist the discipline policy, firearms, pool verification and smoke detector statements are ALL covered on Form 29 (Safety Agreement). Separate statements are not required.
  - This is correct. Please note the changes to the IMPACT Checklist.
- Have you considered doing a video covering the "script" of orientation (professionally)? This would help ensure consistency, reduce workload.
  - This is a project that is tentatively scheduled to begin in September.
- We need to identify resources for conducting training (i.e. laptop, LCD projector, etc.)???
  - Each county should determine which resources are available to staff. Counties may prepare presentations via flip chart, transparency or other non-computerized formats.
- On the continuum, it states you should check CPS records review, corrections, etc., prior to orientation. On the flow chart, it says do this after the orientation is completed and letter of intent is turned in. Which one is it?
  - The IMPACT Inquiry Database Flow Chart is correct. Please note changes to the continuum.

### **Program Recognition:**

- Will other states recognize IMPACT certification as approved certification?
  - Each state has requirements and therefore, will make a determination regarding IMPACT.
- Will people from other states with other certification programs have to go through IMPACT?
  - Any request to waive pre-service training should be in line with Foster Care policy, 1014.3.1.

## Database:

- Is there a field on the database to remove the family if they have a criminal or CPS record?
  - Family information is never removed from the database but the inquiry may be closed for cause at any time. Closed inquiries are stored in the database archives.
- What is the time frame to get a password for the database system?
  - The expected turnaround time will be 2 – 3 working days.
- Who issues the ID numbers for the perspective Foster Parents in the system?
  - The ID numbers are automatically generated when you enter information in the Inquiry Database.
- Clarify the number of days needed to respond; should it be definite 10 days, 10 business days or what?
  - Within 10 working days. All response times are working days.
- Will the IMPACT Database integrate with IDS online? (Or will we have to enter the same information twice?).
  - They are two separate systems; information must be entered into both.
- If a call is made to the 1 877 number re: foster care—who in the county will the alert be sent to? Will the alert come to Director, Supervisor, or worker?
  - The alert will be sent to a central email address. The county will determine who will have access to this information and who will manage the in-coming alerts on a daily basis.
- Studies show that it takes an average of 18 months for families interested in foster care/adoption to follow through on the process. For families whose inquiry is closed in the inquiry database, is there a process to follow-up with the family at a later or periodic interval? (i.e., holidays, change of seasons, etc.)?
  - Family information is never removed from the database but the inquiry may be closed for cause at any time. Closed inquiries are stored in the database archives.
- If after 30 days a family is still not sure about participating, can we offer them more time to decide? A lot of our inquiries are invited to several classes before they decide to attend (or decide to proceed). This process will cause us to potentially lose these families.

- The inquiry will be closed in the database but families should be informed that they might re-contact us at any time to proceed with the IMPACT certification.
- Will the RAC receive only adoption inquiries or will they go to county staff?
  - As is current practice, the RACs will process adoption inquiries; county staff will process foster care and foster/adopt inquiries.
- Who follow up in 48 hours and completes or enters stats for adoptive families? RAC or county staff?
  - Please note the follow up time frame for initial inquiries is now 5 working days. For adoptive families, the RACs will respond to the initial inquiry and schedule the first orientation appointment. The RACs will communicate initial inquiry information to county staff by email, or telephone or in person. County staff will enter data about the orientation into the Inquiry Line Database. County staff will track and follow-up on the initial inquiry until inquiry can be closed or family attends orientation and begins pre-service training.
- How many times should a case manager call an inquiry if they always get a voicemail or answering machine and messages are left but never returned?
  - Three.
- Should we go back and contact previous inquiries that have been contacted at least 3 times or more?
  - No.
- What do counties do with inquiries that are received from families for non-special needs adoption?
  - All adoption inquiries are routed to the 1 877 # and eventually go to the RACs. If it is determined that the family is non-special needs after they have been referred to the county, the case manager should select the final disposition box on the IMPACT Inquiry database and select “non-special needs” or “non-special needs infant wait list” as the inquiry disposition. The case manager should notify (by email or phone or in person) the RAC of the disposition of this inquiry, as the RACs will maintain these waiting lists.
- Under disposition, what about closing a referral before orientation or just after because of an agency decision (not related to CPS or criminal record.) Will there be a drop-down box choice for this?
  - Yes, inquiries may be closed at any time for cause. Select the most appropriate disposition from the drop down menu.
- Can our passwords specify the types of inquiry forms we do? (i.e. Bethany-pass word type 1...full form; DFCS password type 2...only what DFCS needs to fill out. This would save time and reduce errors by all)

- This is a great question; unfortunately we don't have the capability to initiate this at this time.
- Who tracks our diligence in using the database? Will this be tracked by RAC/ADAM?
  - The managers in your region and/or county will decide the person(s) responsible for tracking the data.
- Is there a way to run an additional report from the database that would allow us to know when our next action needs to take place? (For example, in IDS we can enter the most recent case review date on the 590 and then run the case review report that will tell us when the next case review is due.)
  - No, due dates are not calculated by the system.

### **Additional Training Hours**

- Could MAPP trained Foster Parents attend IMPACT for ongoing training hours?
  - Yes. They may also attend as part of a corrective action plan.
- GPS: Fostering Sexually Abused Child—Can we still use this for ongoing training?
  - Staff trained to conduct the workshop may continue to do so.
- Fifteen hours of training is not nearly enough education considering that they [resource parents] are able to earn credit through informal methods (i.e. panel reviews, doctor/therapy appointments, Foster Parent Association Meetings, etc.). How will reducing the mandatory training hours impact issues such as behavior management and policy violations?
  - Ten hours of training is the minimum. Families may choose to receive additional training or workers may recommend additional training if they think additional training hours are needed to help families deal with specific concerns.
- What about families that receive LOC for children in their homes? Policy now states that they need “more than” the current required 15 hours due to the special skills needed to care for our LOC children. How will IMPACT affect LOC level training for Parents?
  - Continue to apply the current LOC policy. IMPACT does not affect these current policies.
- Since on-going training hours have been dropped from 15 to 10, will we be able to reduce the number of hours needed for families that are currently behind on training hours?
  - Once IMPACT is fully implemented these changes will apply to all families.

- Do families have to obtain an additional 10 hours of in service during their 1<sup>st</sup> year of service?
  - The 10 hours of annual training must begin 60 days after approval.
- Isn't the federal minimum for annual hours 15 for the purpose of IVE funding?
  - No, The minimum number of required hours is 10 in federal policy.
- Information Packet—What is it? (as opposed to the Application Packet) What is the difference between the two?
  - The Information Packet is general information sent following the initial inquiry call. The Application Packet is provided at Orientation and includes the Letter of Intent, the Governor's Letter and other information.
- What will be put in place to help counties track training hours since they will no longer be tracked annually?
  - Hours will be tracked annually. (Families should start 60 days after their approval).
- How are the agencies to assure that all families begin in-service training within 60 days after certification? What happens to the family's approval status if they don't begin the training?
  - Staff should encourage families to meet the 60-day start date. If families do not, corrective action steps must be taken. This requirement will be continually stressed throughout the certification process.
- What is the Home evaluation mentioned on page 5? The full home study?
  - Yes, it is the *IMPACT* Resource Family Evaluation Guide, a full home study.
- Will the format of the home study change from 12 skills...to what?
  - Yes, training will be provided on the guidelines for completing this new evaluation tool.
- Will we continue to provide parent-staff development conferences?
  - If funding is available.

## Policy

- When was policy put in place requiring Form 36 for household members other than Foster Parents and Adoptive Parents? Current policy states a health statement & TB/VDRL are required on all household members/children 16 and over.
  - The checklist will be updated to reflect the current policy.
- If we remove TB & RPR from the Health Screen, will PAP test be removed also?

- The TB test will not be removed but we are exploring the possibility of RPR and PAP.
- There is nothing in the Policy Manual about how old someone has to be to be a foster parent. How old is it?
  - Currently policy does not specify an age requirement. This issue is being review by the Policy Unit.
- Will the Home Study Report be changed?
  - Yes. Training will be provided on the new format.
- Phase III, pg. 5- Last bullet- “DFCS children in care may be placed in the home”. Does this mean the home is in temporary or full approval?
  - Full approval because all documentation and verification is complete.
- Are we utilizing the Relative Home Evaluation for FP/AP home studies?
  - No
- Form 36 states: must be completed within 6 months, is the form going to be changed to coincide with the 1year time frame?
  - Yes.
- When will foster parent/foster home policy be revised to reflect new requirements?
  - At the time that IMPACT is fully implemented the policy revisions will be complete.
- How will foster home re-evaluation requirements be impacted? (drug screens, Health checks, fingerprinting, etc.)
  - These elements will be required as stated in current policy.
- Drug screens -- current 5 panel or will it be revised to reflect methamphetamine?
  - Policy reference 1014.24 states substances that are included in the drug screen.
- Would it be possible to relax the requirement to have a face-to-face reference interview? This can be difficult to achieve due to travel concerns and or conflicting schedules. Finding the time for the home evaluation is challenging enough.
  - Yes, policy is being revised and this information will be presented during IMPACT training.

#### **Finger Prints:**

- County staff should complete the GCIC/NCIC fingerprint checks as these are currently processed. Staff will **not** submit Form 404 to the state office.

- When will the state consider NCIC rather than GCIC?
  - There is a requirement for both systems to be used to document criminal history.
- My problem with fingerprints is getting a check from Regional Accounting. It will take me 6-8 weeks from the date of my check request before the check arrives at my desk.
  - This question should be provided to your Manager of Field Operations so that he/she may address this concern.

### **Budget:**

- What fund resource can be utilized for medical exams?
  - Please review current policies as there are no changes related to this issue.
- How much can we pay co-leaders for only 20 hours of training?
  - \$350.00 Budget code UAS 531 for foster parents who are co-leaders for IMPACT workshops.
- In the past, Health Departments have conducted health exams. Could the state negotiate this as an alternative to seeing a medical doctor.
  - County agencies are encouraged to create local partnerships.
- For families that have health insurance to pay for physicals, will we no longer reimburse them from Budget 531?
  - The policy regarding reimbursement for health examinations is not changing.

### **Program:**

- Will we have co-trainers? What restrictions will be placed on co-leaders? (i.e. must be Foster Parents? Must be certified? Can't take kids in care while co-leading?)
  - Yes, there will be co-trainers. Refer to policy 1014.22
- When is the family considered certified to continue the 10 hours of training? Is that after training or after home evaluation is approved?
  - When all components of the certification process have been completed and the evaluation is approved.
- How does this program impact the number of families per session? Clarify class size and when to start classes. If you have only 1 family for IMPACT orientation, do you complete it for 1?
  - Yes. Instructions for conducting one-on-one training will be provided during IMPACT training. There are no minimum class sizes for the workshop. The suggested average class size is 20.

- Can potential resources enter training at anytime?
  - No. Families that miss up to 3 hours should be provided the missed training hours on a one-on-one basis in order to complete their required certification hours.
- When should I plan to begin this program?
  - Effective July 1, the Inquiry Line database will be available, the orientation materials will be provided to staff and the pre-service training of trainers will begin.
- What do we do with families that we have already interviewed for the next MAPP session?
  - These families should participate in MAPP training.
- Do we park our inquiring families now in anticipation of delivery of the new curriculum?
  - No.
- When will the Case Managers receive training for the 1 hour training modules for IMPACT? (How soon and where?) How long will the training be?
  - Training will begin in July. A memorandum from Dr. Janet Oliva, dated June 18, 2004, was sent to county staff with dates, times and locations. The training will be 4 days.
- Is it necessary to give the letter of intent and criminal records consent form to be taken home and mailed back? (Normally we ask for an inquiry form to be returned the night of orientation, unless the family wants to think about it a little longer. Then we give them a self-addressed envelope. This gives us an idea of how many people would like to participate in MAPP immediately)
  - No, the forms may be completed and submitted right after the Orientation.
- What happens if someone walks in and wants to start training? When do you do the inquiry intake form for individuals who drop in the orientation sessions without an invite?
  - All initial inquiries must be referred to the 1 877 number to make their initial inquiry.
- Will initial inquiries still be approved by supervisor and county director before inviting to IMPACT?
  - There is no state policy in place mandating this requirement. This is determined by each county office.



- With the reduction in required certification hours, will the training material now being developed encompass all aspects of MAPP? Will the new training provide enough information so that interested families will

understand what fostering is actually about? Will the reduction in training hours and certification training reduce the quality the Foster Parents that we use?

- The new curriculum will provide the knowledge or information necessary for families to make a determination about foster parenting or adoption; and basic preparation information about the children in care and their needs. The ongoing training will address the family's specific needs for parenting children placed in their home.
- It is unclear when the information packet is to be given—at inquiry or after orientation...which is it?
  - The Information Packet is given at inquiry. The Application Packet is given at orientation.
- What is “verbal agreement”? Is this training being incorporated into the ASAP/CAP training?
  - These are separate programs. ASAP/CAP is an adoption training for case managers. IMPACT is a certification program for resource parents.
- Is there a timeframe for how often orientation should be held? (i.e. once a week, twice a week, once every 2 weeks..)?
  - Families should be offered an Orientation date within 30 working days of their initial inquiry.
- Will we be able to offer more than 1 IMPACT training at a time (i.e. One training on Tuesday nights for 7 weeks, 3 hours per week and another training that meets on 3 Saturdays for 6 ½ hours)
  - A certified trainer must lead the class. The number of classes offered concurrently is at the county's discretion.
- How long does the RD case manager have to complete the “home evaluation”?
  - The policy requirement will not change (6-weeks after completion of the pre-certification program.) The assessment will continue to be a comprehensive tool to evaluate the resource families.
- Will the assessment be shortened?
  - The assessment will continue to be a comprehensive evaluation of a family's ability to foster and/or adopt.
- If a family has already attended or completed MAPP, but was never approved as a resource, do they have to go through IMPACT training?

- The family will have to go through IMPACT training if it has been more than a year since completion of MAPP. If the family did not complete MAPP, then they must begin the certification process with IMPACT.
- Do you have to have the orientation within 5 working days of the inquiry or just the appointment set up for the orientation?
  - The appointment must be set up within 5 working days.
- Since the training can be held even 8 hours at a time—How much homework is due between classes? (i.e. strengths/needs, etc.)
  - The IMPACT training curriculum and the Resource Family Evaluation Guide will provide an answer to this question.
- Do both spouses have to attend the orientation?
  - Yes, each parent is expected to attend orientation as per policy reference 1014.2.
- Are the 20 hours to be taught in order?
  - Yes, the pre-service curriculum should be taught in the order that it is organized in the trainers' manual.
- Will New workers or workers who are not MAPP trained—Will those people become certified IMPACT trainers and/or trained after taking the 5-day classes?
  - There are no pre-requisites to be a trainer. The IMPACT Train the Trainer course will certify trainers.
- At what point in the inquiry process does the Director approve or disapprove the family to attend IMPACT.
  - Follow current county policy regarding this concern.
- Will the IMPACT Inquiry Process eliminate last minute inquiries that want to attend IMPACT that starts this week? Will they be able to start after the Orientation/ Mtg.2?
  - Last minute inquirers will be able to start IMPACT classes immediately as long as they have not misses 3 hours of pre-certification training. Families will also be required to meet all of the other pre-requisites for attending pre-certification training. Families that miss workshops (as long as the total number of hours missed does not exceed 3) can participate in a one-on-one provided by staff to make up the missed hours .
- Why would a county start a MAPP class when IMPACT classes have to be implemented after the AD campaign gets started end of MAY? (Don't have time for 2 programs.)
  - The start date for IMPACT is July 1, 2004. Until then, Counties should continue to utilize MAPP.

**Other:**

- How do you check Pardon & Parole database?
  - [You can check this through the IDS online system.](#)
- Is there an updated version of the handout Foster Care in Georgia? The one we have is Rev. 10/02
  - [Yes, It is available at www.ga.gov](#)

**Issues Beyond the Scope of this Project:**

The following questions and concerns cannot be addressed by this project and are listed here for information purposes only:

- What about staff allocation? Will recruitment, orientation, tracking, training, assessment and on-going training be taken into consideration as a SSCM work requirement and show up as a staff allocation issue?
- New training sounds great, but case loads going up, staff allocation going down, no resource development doing training, foster care workers now have to do the training. How can we continue to “properly” care for kids we have and “properly” do more?
- Will RD’s only do IMPACT? This is going to be full time to keep within the time frames?
- I supervise 5 RD workers (5 Counties). Each worker does RD, Adoption, Placement and matching duties—IMPACT looks great and seem we will be building better, stronger and more families, however, the problem is RD worker will need to be dedicated tom ore training. Thus needing to be freed up on some duties to do RD in efforts to meet expectations...HELP!
- Will placement workers be informed of the need for their participation in and encouragement of maintaining foster homes? Will training be mandatory for placement workers?